NOTE XV.

THE CORRECT STATUS OF ELAPS COLLARIS SCHLEGEL

BY

JOSEPH C. THOMPSON,

Surgeon, U. S. Navy.

In 1908 Dr. F. A. JENTINK, Director of the Natural History Museum at Leyden (Holland) and Dr. TH. W. VAN LIDTH DE JEUDE graciously extended the courtesy of allowing me to study for a few weeks in the Herpetological Department of the Leyden Museum.

The type specimens of *Elaps collaris* which were described by SCHLEGEL in 1837 were examined. This species was correctly placed by its author in the genus *Elaps*. It belongs to the group that is characterized by Mr. BOULENGER as having the "symphysial in contact with the anterior chin-shields". It is allied to *E. narduccii* JAN, which it resembles in having the sixth supralabial in contact with the parietal and in the colour pattern of the body. It is specifically distinct in the following details: The parietal shield is shorter, being less than the interorbital space; the nuchal band is sharply defined, and cannot be mistaken for the light band over the head, that is so common a mark in the genus; the gastrosteges are less numerous, the records are from two hundred twenty-eight to two hundred twenty-nine, whereas the range in *narduccii* is from two hundred forty to three hundred fifteen.

The change in the third volume of our text-book "The Catalogue of the Snakes in the British Museum" that will result from this is as follows: The description of *Hemibungarus collaris* on page 393 will be regarded as transferred to page 433 and inserted after that of *Elaps narduccii* JAN.

One of the Type Specimens.

N°. 1443. Leyden Museum. (Ancien Cabinet, Manille). Locality unknown. Male; total length 442, tail 26 mm.

Squamation. Scales in 15 continuous rows; those on the anterior portion of the body are acute angled in the dorsal rows and truncate in the lateral rows; posteriorly the tendency for all the scales is to be acute angled except those in the first and second rows, which continue to be truncate. Ventrals 228. Anal divided. Subcaudals 21 pairs, the terminal scute short and rounded. Four gular shields in the median line between the posterior geneials and the first ventral. Rostral broader than long (2.4 mm. by 1.4 mm.). Internasals broader than long (1.5 mm. by 1.3 mm.); entering into the formation of the upper rim of the nostril. Præfrontals longer than broad (2.1 mm. by 1.9 mm.). Frontal small (2.7 mm. by 1.7 mm.); lateral edges nearly parallel; terminating behind in a trifle less than a right angle. Parietals (4.6 mm. by 3.5 mm.) not in contact with the inferior postocular; laterally in contact with the sixth supralabial; posteriorly in contact with a large occipital shield and with the first scale in the median and the first scale in each of the seventh rows. Nasal divided, the anterior the larger. Præocular (1.5 mm.) in contact with the third supralabial. Postoculars two, the inferior the smaller. Anterior temporal absent; posterior behind the sixth labial and in contact with the parietal and the seventh supralabial. Seven supralabials, the third and fourth entering the eye; the sixth the largest, its suture with the parietal on a level with the center of the pupil. Mental longer than broad, in contact with the anterior chin-shields. Seven infralabials, the first pair not touching behind the mental. Anterior chin-shields longer than the

posterior, (3 mm., 2.6 mm.); anterior in contact with the first to the fourth labial, posterior with the fourth labial only.

Coloration. Time and the preservative have altered the original colours to a seal brown above and a muddy cream below. The tip of the snout brown, involving the rostral and internasal shields. A light band crosses the snout covering the first and second supralabials, the two nasals, and the anterior one third of the præfrontal shields. The top and sides of the head are brown; involving the frontal, the posterior two thirds of the præfrontals, the supraoculars, the parietals, the azygos shield behind the parietal mutual suture, the præoculars, the postoculars, the posterior temporal, the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and the anterior superior angle of the seventh supralabial shields. A light nuchal band, covering the adjacent halves of two scales in the median row, and three scales on the side of the neck; below the posterior margin of this collar is in line with the anterior margin of the first ventral shield. The lower surface of the head is light; on either side of the lower lip there is a dark spot covering the third, fourth, and fifth infralabial shields. The body above is a uniform seal brown, becoming a trifle darker posteriorly. Below there are forty-three light spots, these cover as a rule three to four gastrosteges. These spots extend on the sides of the body as a triangular mark, covering usually two scales in the first row and one scale in the second row; occasionally these lateral extensions are larger and cover three scales in the first row, two in the second row, and one in the third row. These spots are separated from each other by from one to two dark ventrals; spots number sixteen to twenty and thirty-six to forty-three are confluent. Tail cream coloured; a saddle mark seven scales long above and crossing the eighth pair of urosteges below; behind this another spot five scales long and four scales wide; the last spot covers four dorsal scales and the upper half of the conical terminal scale.

Anatomy. The nostril is situated above the suture between the first and second supralabial. The eye is

directed upwards and outwards, the diameter (0.9 mm.) being one half its distance (1.8 mm.) from the mouth; the center of the eye is above the suture between the fourth and fifth supralabial. The left maxillary bone bears a single fang (1.6 mm. long), the base of which is at the suture between the second and third supralabial shields. There are no small teeth on the maxillary bone in addition to the fangs. Head 12 mm. long, 6.8 mm. broad, snout 4 mm., interorbital space 4 mm. wide.

One of the Type Specimens.

N°. 1444. Leyden Museum. (Ancien Cabinet).

Locality unknown. Total length 399, tail 24 mm.

Squamation. Scales in 15 rows; ventrals 229; anal divided; subcaudals 21 pairs, the terminal scute blunt. Præocular one; postoculars two; anterior temporal absent; supralabials seven, the third and fourth entering the eye, the sixth broadly in contact with the parietal shield.

Coloration. On the abdomen there are thirty-five light spots. Tail light with a saddle mark and a dark tip.

Anatomy. Maxillary bone without small teeth. Head 11 mm. long, 6.1 mm. wide; snout 3.6 mm.; diameter of eye 0.8 mm., its distance from the mouth 1.8 mm.

Type Specimen of *Elaps gastrodelus* DUMÉRIL et BIBRON.

N°. 3930. Mus. d'Hist. Nat. Paris. Locality unknown.

Female; total length 336, tail 22 mm.

Squamation. Scales in 15 rows; ventrals 228; anal divided; subcaudals 22 pairs, terminal scute blunt. Rostral broader than long, visible from above, suture between the internasals one half as long as that between the præfrontals; frontal nearly one and one half times as long as broad, a trifle shorter than the parietal; nasal divided; præocular one; postoculars two; temporals, on the right side an anterior and a posterior (1—1), the anterior in contact with the postoculars and supralabials V—VI, on the left side the anterior temporal is fused with supralabial

VI, formula (0—1); supralabials seven, the third and fourth entering the eye; infralabials seven, first pair not touching behind the mental; anterior genials larger than the posterior, in contact with four infralabials.

Coloration. Abdomen with forty-one transverse light spots, covering two to two and one half ventrals, these continue on the sides so as to cover one scale in the first row; these spots are separated by from three to three and one half ventrals. Tail with traces of two dark cross bands.

Anatomy. Diameter of the eye 0.8 mm., distance from the mouth 1.5 mm. Maxillary bone extending forwards beyond the palatine; no small maxillary teeth. Postfrontal bone absent.

Notes. The jar containing this specimen bore a printed label giving the locality as the "Antilles", and the collector as M. KERONDREN. In the Catalogue of the Collection the original entery reads "*Elaps collaris* SCHLEGEL" and the locality "Manille". This was in the handwriting of a copyist in the time of DUMÉRIL. Later the "*collaris* SCHLEGEL" was crossed through, and "*gastrodelus* D. & B." written above them. The "Manille" was written over by "Antilles". This alteration in the records was in the handwriting of M. BRACONNIER.

In this species the anterior temporal is normally absent. Occasionally it is present as in this specimen, and in the one figured by JAN in Icon. Gen. 43, pl. II, fig. 2.

U. S. F. S. Albatross,
Saus alito, California,
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